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Remarks by Vice President George Bush & DDCT John McMahon
at the

Swearing-In Ceremony of John N. McMahon,
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence Agency

June 10, 1982

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DIRECTOR WILLIAM CASEY: Welcome, all of you. We're here to swear John McMahon. Among his many great accomplishments here, he's established the rolling stone record, having -- having held four jobs in the last 18 months. Well, I have his solemn commitment that he'll work at this one longer than he has at the last three.

[Laughter]

DIRECTOR CASEY: It's my special happy privilege to introduce someone who certainly needs no introduction in this building, the President of the United States Senate and the Vice President of the United States.

[Applause]

VICE PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH: Thank you, all, very much.

Thank you, Director.

Thank you. Thank you very, very much. Thank you very much. Better not stop -- keep clapping. You'll outdo the ovation we gave Lionel Hampton that day.

Bill, I'm just delighted to be back here.

And at the outset, let me just pay my respects to the Director, to tell you what you know, and that is how much confidence our President has in him. We see him in action all the time. Regrettably, I've been seeing him in action too much over the last couple of days. But backed admirably by your product and representing the intelligence community in an outstanding fashion.

[Sound of baby]

VICE PRESIDENT BUSH: I'm really -- wait just a minute, you.

[Laughter]

VICE PRESIDENT BUSH: I'm really delighted to be back here at Langley. And it's something of a homecoming for me. And I can't really think of a better occasion for this than John's swearing-in. My happiness in saluting McMahon's ascendancy to the stratosphere is somewhat mitigated, after Bobby Inman's retirement, departure for private sector. And I don't think it would be remiss if I said here that he should be complimented for his extraordinary work, the work he's done for NSA, for Naval Intelligence, for the entire community, and most recently for CIA.

We're grateful, Bob, for your outstanding service.

[Applause]

VICE PRESIDENT BUSH: But John will bring his own unique talents to this post. I guess it's one of the rare occasions for Washington. We have an opportunity to salute people we respect outgoing and incoming at the same time. I learned a long time ago that hardly anything is off the record. I thought that my remarks here would be off the record, but I don't know who these suspicious characters are. So I assume that they are not off the record. And I will hastily revise my text and get on with the -- get on -- get on with...

[Applause]

VICE PRESIDENT BUSH: ...what it says here.

I've known John for a number of years. We worked together, as some of you, many of you, as I look around this room, remember, when I was DCI. I had a few anecdotes to tell you about our times together. And then Dan reminded me that they're all "need to know." So I will hold back on that.

I guess the central compliment that I could pay John would be a paraphrase of St. John, and that would be apropos enough, considering the inscription that you all walk by each morning on your way to work. But what I was simply going to say was that greater love hath no man than he who devotes his whole life to his country.

And don't worry, John. That doesn't mean I'm asking you to make the ultimate sacrifice. But it has been -- it has been a remarkable career, as the Director alluded to: DDCI, the IC staff, to DDO and to DDI. And I know we've left out some other acronyms. But nevertheless that summarizes, as everybody in this room, knows very clearly, a great deal of accomplishment.

John is probably the only person in the intelligence community who's occupied almost every senior position here, except Les Dirks's (?) job.

And, Les, I understand now that he is making room in case John decides he wants to have a shot at that job. And I...

[Laughter]

VICE PRESIDENT BUSH: I'm sorry to hear about that, as a matter of fact, after the great service that Les has given.

The American people, whom John has served so well over

the years, will never really know -- and this is true of you, as it is of him -- how fine a job he's done on their behalf in all of these positions that he's held. But it's no secret that you don't reach the second-highest post in the intelligence community easily, you don't get there without a record of excellence.

This is beginning to sound like a retirement speech, so I ought to move along with what I had in mind to say to you all today. And some of it harks back. We went through a rough period not so long ago, difficult times. The intelligence community, the profession, if you will, under daily assault. And it's hard enough doing your job, God knows. It's a rough enough world out there as it is. And some of the rhetoric and some of the excesses of that investigative zealotry were deeply damaging and deeply hurtful to individuals.

We went through -- I say we because for one fleeting year I was a part of it -- quite an ordeal. The barrages out there fired into the press and elsewhere, the amateur sleuths, some very arrogant congressional staffers who had no concern -- I said it then and I'll say it again -- no concern, no concern at all for security or confidentiality. And I'll never forget that. But much more, I'll never forget your performance, because you endured it with discipline, grace, sometimes, surprisingly, even humor, as you saw these people come out and, by implication, at least, in sometime more directly, challenge your dedication to your work. You rose up above all that and you endured it with discipline and with grace, and because you were dedicated to your country and to your craft and dedicated to the CIA.

But fortunately for our country, we're out of that period now. It's behind us, a handful of abuses in the distant past long since corrected. And we're on a new track.

I hope you sense the depth of this President's respect for the intelligence community. There have been good and recent positive developments: the final passage of the Identities Bill, that we worked hard for, which the President strongly supported. The President signed Executive Order 12333, which will go a long, long way toward revitalizing the confidence and pride in this community. He's established -- reestablished the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. Bill Casey might argue whether that's good or bad, but nevertheless it shows a confidence in intelligence, 'cause if -- it hadn't changed much since I was here, I'm sure. But I remember getting briefed up by half the people in this room so I could sound intelligent in front of the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. But nevertheless it's there, and I think it does reflect the President's confidence in intelligence itself.

The President's embarked on a major campaign to rebuild

the capabilities of the intelligence community. And we've seen some significant manifestation of that in the work that Bill, and certainly Bobby Inman, has done on presenting the budgetary aspects of all of this up on the Hill.

And we've seen something else, too: an awareness out there in this country. I'm a great believer in the pendulum theory, and I believe this country now appreciates -- maybe not understands all the complexities of intelligence, but fully appreciates the need to have an intelligence capability second to none. And they see this as vital, they see it vital to our own national interest, our own survival, if you will. I think it's fair to say that the public is much more conscious of the nature of the struggle to sustain our democracy and our ideas, more aware, perhaps, since Poland and Afghanistan and so much else, of the threatening darkness at noon.

I try not to speak for the President, as a rule, but -- he seems to do a pretty good job of speaking for himself. If you don't believe me, ask the British. But I do speak for him in all confidence when he -- when I say he wouldn't be, he wouldn't have a chance to be a decent President without the product of the CIA and of the entire intelligence community. I know I speak, in a much less elevated role, for myself when I say that. Early each morning, one from among you appears from Langley, a little black attache case in hand. And I know from having been DCI what effort and what sacrifices, long hours, use of the intellect, goes into gathering the contents of that attache case every single day.

And I was offered the opportunity to come here -- let me just, in conclusion, take you back. That was 1975 -- some of my political friends said, "Don't do that." They said that it would be detrimental to a political career. Well, I didn't know at the time if that was really true. And at that moment in history, I really, frankly, didn't give much of a damn. I look back on my time here as probably the most exciting and fulfilling period of my life, because of working with John -- and I hate to start clicking off other names, so I'll stop there -- and others -- I should say others, so many others in this room. John's pride in what he does, a manifestation of your pride in what you do, is utterly contagious, utterly inspirational. And that, in no small part, is why in my office -- and you've got to be careful when you have foreign dignitaries standing there -- flies the flag of the CIA. And it's going to be there just as long as I am.

[Applause]

MAN: It's no my pleasure to give the oath of office.

[Oath of office]

[Applause]

JOHN MCMAHON: I've only been the DDCI for a few moments, and already I've learned two things. Don't be the last speaker on a program, and never follow the Vice President, George Bush.

Mr. Vice President, Director Casey, Judge Webster, Admiral Inman, members of the National Foreign Intelligence Council, senior officials of the Central Intelligence Agency, staff members of the congressional committees, honored guests, friends, colleagues, my family, not the least of which is my granddaughter Kate, from whom you already heard.

[Laughter]

MCMAHON: It is indeed an honor to be nominated by the President of the United States as Deputy Director of Central Intelligence. It is an honor to be confirmed by the United States Senate. And the presence of the Vice President, George Bush, here today is a tribute to our mission.

Mr. Vice President, I think I can speak in behalf of everyone in this room and everyone throughout the intelligence community to thank you for your presence and welcome you home again.

[Applause]

MCMAHON: There has been a lot of talk about a long career in the intelligence agency finally reaching the DDCI. I ask you to look before you. You see George Bush, a former DCI, now the Vice President of the United States. You see Bill Casey, a former intelligence officer from World War II, now the Director of Central Intelligence. And even in Moscow, you see Yuri Andropov...

[Laughter and applause]

MCMAHON: Good old Yuri, after 13 years,...

[Laughter]

MCMAHON: ...of leading -- of leading the KGB, is now a leading contender to replace Brezhnev as head of the Soviet Union.

It is obvious that there is unlimited headroom in the intelligence profession.

[Laughter and applause]

MCMAHON: I don't want to attempt to bore you with the litany of the challenges which face us all in the intelligence community. They are obvious to all of us. But I do see a tremendous requirement which faces us, but has prompted within the intelligence community a spirit of purpose, a spirit that has been prompted by the strong presidential support, of which the Vice President spoke, and of the strong support from Congress to give the individual organizations of the intelligence community the manpower and fiscal resources it needs to address the awesome task before us. And we are now in the process of rebuilding, to flesh out with human and technical assets those things which we need in order to meet the policymakers' requirements for intelligence, so that we can produce the finest and the best intelligence in the world. The United States, as a nation, cannot settle for anything else.

A few years ago, I stood on this stage and made the comment that it was a privilege to work in CIA. In fact, it was an opportunity for which we should really pay to work. I didn't realize that the pay cap would make me a prophet in my own times.

[Laughter and applause]

MCMAHON: But what prompted me and what drove me to make that comment was the recognition that within this agency there existed a tremendous wealth of talent and dedication. That same talent and dedication exists throughout the intelligence community. And under Bill Casey's leadership, it will be our desire to bring forth that talent and bring that expertise to bear on the many problems which face us.

As the Vice President commented, we would be very remiss in making any remarks if we did not pay recognition to one Admiral Bobby Inman.

Bob, you've had a brilliant intelligence career. I, more than anyone else, recognize that you're a tough act to follow. And indeed you have left very large footsteps. But those footsteps are highly visible and they point in the right direction, and I'm very grateful for that. And all of us here wish you equal success in your second career, whatever it may be. And until then, we wish you good luck and Godspeed.

[Applause]

MCMAHON: To all of you out there, I look forward to a continuing service together. Again I say it is indeed a privilege.

That concludes our program for today.

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[Laughter]

MCMAHON: I ask you all to remain until the Vice President and his party have left.

Good luck and thank you for being my witnesses today.

[Applause]